Western academic hatred of Henry Corbin (ع) as a mirror of the Ummayad hatred of ʿAlī (ع)

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In the Name of God the Light of lights!
(بِسم الله النُّور الأنوار)

Since the late 1970s, and especially beginning with Dmitri Gutas [ibn Abī Sufyān] -- who plays the part of an archetypal Muʿāwīyah in the plot of this modern counter-dramaturgy -- the Anglophone Western Ivory Tower has engaged in a systematic and protracted intellectual as well as personal smear campaign against the scholarship, writings and ideas of the great French Iranologist and Islamologist Henry Corbin (d. 1978). This smear and intellectual defamation campaign has now become entrenched within the Anglophone Ivory Tower (and to some extent among some of figures of the German academic establishment as well who merely ape whatever the Anglos are doing) who have in recent years sought to normalize their sophomoric views of Corbin beyond the corporate-driven, neoliberal Western Academy and into the mainstream. Arguably, literary clown Michael Muhammad Knight's

ignorant lumping of Henry Corbin with the Neo-Traditionalists in one of his mediocre novels is part of the function of normalizing this Corbin-hatred by the Anglophone Ivory Tower that probably used MMK as a mouthpiece in order to communicate such enmity to larger (and basically impressionable) audiences beyond the conceited, self-styled academic specialists of the Anglo-American Academy itself.

That aside, according to Corbin's late wife, Stella Corbin (d. 2003), who communicated this tidbit to myself in the presence of others during 2000 in Paris, the works, ideas, writings and even the person of Corbin himself were already the target of such a duplicitous politically-motivated smear campaign in Iran during the early and mid 1970s by those highly placed and well-connected Pahlavi era hacks envious of him who had the ear of the royal court, and simply because Henry Corbin did not pull rank or adhere to the Neo-Traditionalist dogma and found the Neo-Traditionalist school to be composed of mainly obnoxious obscurantists with dangerously reactionary political leanings communicating their obnoxious obscurantism and reactionary politics via esotericism.

According to Corbin's wife, it was due to this entanglement – albeit other considerations likewise animated it -- whereby Corbin once made the famous statement that "the Church is Ahriman," seeing how in the name of some nebulous 'orthodoxy' some figures from this Neo-

Traditionalist camp have been bent on re-establishing the authoritarian power of the Roman Catholic (and now Eastern Orthodox) theocracy, while Henry Corbin located any veridical spiritual *ecclesia* beyond necessarily established human institutions, be they contemporary or historical. Nor did overtly racist pseudo-intellectual gobbledegook of the sort enunciated by Frithjof Schuon (d. 1998) in his book 'Castes and Races'[1] appeal to the temperament of Corbin. In short, true spiritual elites in Corbin's *weltanschauung* are not spawned by biology but by individual effort in the spatiotemporal world and Grace from Above, a bounty open to the entirety of the human subject regardless of the circumstances and accidents of birth and biological genealogy as explicitly articulated in **Qurʾān 4:1**, especially given that Henry Corbin was in fact a Shiʿi Muslim who had made his *shāhada* in the late 1940s in Iran and in the presence of the Kirmānī Shaykhīs.

On top of this, the fact that René Guénon (d. 1951) had completely misrepresented and dissed Corbin's book '*Suhrawardi d'Alep*, *fondateur de la doctrine illuminative* (Paris: 1939)[2] in a review (which can now be found in 'Insights into Islamic Esotericism and Taosim' p. 74)[3] exposed Guénon himself as having limited intellectual horizons of the full historical spectrum of the Islamic philosophical project -- esp. in the eastern Islamic lands -- as well as highlighting limitations in Guénon's own

technical grasp of Arabic (which others have likewise highlighted about Guénon elsewhere more recently).

To return to the misdeeds of the Anglophone Academy against Corbin, the tediousness of this establishment's anti-Corbin campaign was notably demonstrated in John Walbridge's 2011 article **THE DEVOTIONAL AND OCCULT WORKS OF SUHRAWARDI THE ILLUMINATIONIST (**in Ishraq no.2 2011: **80-97**)[4] (see my review[5]) where not a single mention was made of Henry Corbin's scholarship on the very topic Walbridge was pontificating on in the piece. The more recent examples of such intellectual skulduggery by others can be multiplied such that silence by the Anglophone Academy around Corbin and his scholarship can be contextualized as a form of *Othering* in order to eventually erase all memory of him as a scholar and a philosopher, not to mention his works. In that respect, we find it quaint that in that specific article a former Bahā'ī such as John Walbridge (the veritable archetypal Yazīd ibn al-Muʿāwīyah of this story) would behave towards Henry Corbin by way of intellectual silence and ostracism in an identical fashion as to how his former Bahā'ī co-religionists are encouraged to behave towards what they call 'covenant breakers', which in itself highlights the fact that Walbridge's approach, despite pretensions to the contrary, is far from being dispassionate, objective, scholarly or remotely unbiased.

Be that as it may, and given all of this, it not a stretch of the imagination to compare this Anglophone spearheaded Corbin-hatred to the Ummayad's policy of instutionalized hatred and excoriation of the first Imām ʿAlī (ع) echoing thereby the words of the famous *ḥadīth* (ما كنا نعرف المنافقين على عهد رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إلا ببغض علي), "*We have not recognized the hypocrites towards the covenant of the Messenger of God, blessings be upon Him and peace, except by [their] hatred against ʿAlī,*" *my trans.*)[6] (). While certain orthodox Muslim believers may be scandalized by such as comparison, the fact is that within the universe of Shiʿi esotericism the true, realized believer [i.e. gnostic initiate] and so partisan of the Imām is united with the Imām in a *unio mystica* as the manifestation of the unified and contiguous legion of the Hiero-Intelligence/Nexal Consciousness (*ʿaql*) such that hatred of the true expositor of the Imām's *arcana*, which Henry Corbin clearly was, is in essence hatred of the Imām Himself and so in itself constitutes *naṣb* (hatred of the Prophet's Family and so infidelity to the Covenant of *Alast*).

In the **Fāṭimīya Sūfī Order** we consider Henry Corbin to be a holy figure and a gate of knowledge to the divine gnosis (باب العلم للمعرفة الله). We commemorate the date of his birth and death as Holy Days, and we enthusiastically recommend all of his books, writings and articles as a solid orientation to our own post-Islamic Bayānī doctrine. To us, Henry

Corbin was quite literally Suhrawardī (d. 1191) revisted and so we refer to him as the *shaykh'ul-ishrāq* (Master of Illumination).

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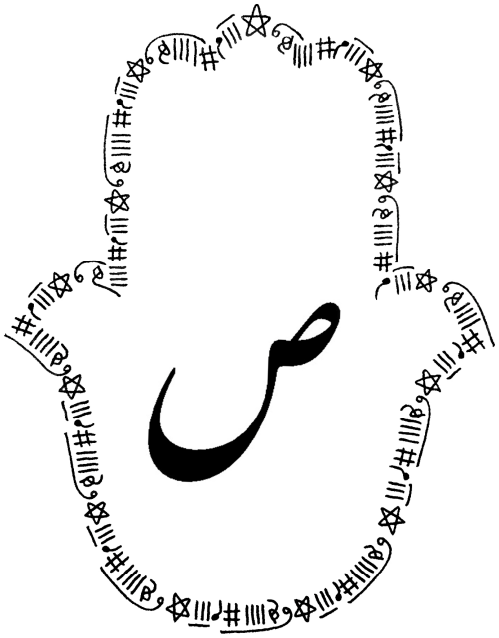
[1] https://www.amazon.com/Castes-Races-Frithjof-Schuon/dp/0900588225

[2] https://books.google.com.au/books/about/Suhraward%C3%AE_d_Alep.html?id=Mrp5AAAAMAAJ&redir_esc=y

[3] https://books.google.com.au/books/about/Insights_Into_Islamic_Esoterism_and_Taoi.html?id=t2MicNN1KiUC&redir_esc=y

[4] https://iphras.ru/uplfile/smirnov/ishraq/2/9walbri.pdf

[5] https://wahidazal.blogspot.com/2012/06/regarding-john-walbridges-recent.html

[6] See also http://www.shiapen.com/comprehensive/muawiya/momin-or-munafiq.html